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Letter dated 29 March 2011 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 1973 (2011), adopted on 17 March 2011, as well as my letters of 18 March, 19 March and 22 March 2011, concerning the measures authorized by paragraphs 4 and 8 of resolution 1973 (2011) in order to "protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack" and to "enforce compliance with the ban on flights imposed by paragraph 6" (of the resolution).

I would like to inform you that France has carried out the following operations since 22 March:

- Reinforcement of the French naval presence with the arrival in the area of the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle.
- Deployment of air defence frigates and their surveillance radar in order to enforce the no-fly zone.
- Missions to monitor maritime airspace.
- Further reconnaissance and support missions by fighter planes in the context of enforcement of the no-fly zone in the areas of Misrata, Sirte, Zintan and Ajdabiya.
- Strikes against a fighter plane that was operating in violation of the no-fly zone around Misrata.
- Strikes carried out against armoured vehicles to protect civilians and the civilian populated area around Ajdabiya, Misrata and Zintan.

These operations were conducted in cooperation with other countries.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

I hereby inform you of the measures taken by France under the authorization of resolution 1973 (2011).

(*Signed*) Gérard **Araud**

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31 March 2011

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Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010)

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 1936 (2010), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council every four months on the progress made towards the fulfilment of the responsibilities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The present report is the second submitted pursuant to that resolution.

2. The report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since my last report (S/2010/606) of 26 November 2010. It covers key political developments and regional and international events concerning Iraq, as well as operational and security matters.

II. Summary of key political developments pertaining to Iraq

A. Political developments, including the Government formation process

3. On 21 December 2010, a new Government, led by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, was endorsed by the Iraqi Council of Representatives. It was hailed as a "national partnership government", consisting of the country's main political blocs. The formation of the Government brought to an end the nine-month political stalemate that followed the national elections held on 7 March 2010. This development should enable Iraqi leaders to begin to tackle the major political, social and economic challenges.

4. The new Government was formed on the basis of a power-sharing agreement, reached on 11 November 2010, between the main political blocs. Following the agreement, the Council of Representatives lifted de-Baathification charges against three key Iraqiya bloc leaders. One of the leaders, Saleh al-Mutlaq, was appointed as one of three Deputy Prime Ministers. The other two Deputy Prime Ministers, Hussein Shahristani and Rowsch Shaways, were appointed from the National Alliance and the Kurdistan Alliance, respectively. Most ministerial posts were divided on the basis of the power-sharing agreement.

5. The Government of Iraq currently consists of 42 ministries, including 16 State ministries. Two ministerial portfolios are held by women, one of which is the State

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Minister for Women's Affairs. Separately, the Council of Representatives approved a law allowing the election of up to three Vice-Presidents, but the candidates nominated by the President have yet to be endorsed by Parliament.

6. The appointment of several ministers remains pending, including that of the Minister of Planning and the heads of three key security-related ministries, namely the Ministries of Defence, the Interior and National Security Affairs. The main political blocs had agreed in principle that they would nominate "independent candidates" to the security ministries. Until an agreement is reached on the candidates, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki continues to manage the security portfolios.

7. The formation of the proposed National Council for Strategic Policies, also agreed upon in the power-sharing agreement, has not taken place. Although a draft law for its establishment was presented in the Council of Representatives in late November 2010, it has not yet been adopted owing to continuing disagreements over its proposed competencies, composition and the mechanism for the election of its head. The leader of the Iraqiya bloc, Ayad Allawi, who was initially expected to assume a leadership role in the Council, stated in March 2011 that he would no longer seek a position on it.

8. Other aspects of the power-sharing agreement have yet to be addressed, including a freeze of the activities and a review of the Accountability and Justice Commission, which handles de-Baathification files. The Federation Council, which would serve as the second house of parliament with representation of the governorates, as provided for in the Constitution, remains to be established.

9. On 18 January 2011, in response to a request from the Office of the Prime Minister, the Federal Supreme Court issued an opinion on the status of the independent commissions, including the Central Bank, the Independent High Electoral Commission and the proposed Independent High Commission for Human Rights. The Court ruled that the Council of Ministers, as the executive branch, should have oversight over commissions that have executive roles, notwithstanding their independence. The decision received significant attention in the media and concerns were raised by a number of political parties, particularly the Iraqiya bloc, as well as some of the institutions themselves. On 7 March 2011, in response to a request from the Council of Representatives, the Federal Supreme Court issued a clarification, reaffirming the "administrative and financial" independence of the commissions in question and stressing the need to keep them immune from any influence that would affect the independence of their decisions. It is not yet clear what the implications of the Court's ruling will be for those institutions.

10. Separately, the Council of Representatives has begun discussing legislation regarding the Federal Supreme Court. The current draft legislation includes proposals by the Higher Judicial Council for an adjunct "advisory commission", which is aimed at enhancing the judicial process in Iraq, especially in the higher/appellate courts. The commission would consist of two legal experts and two Islamic jurists as provided for in the Constitution. Members of the commission would participate in the Court's deliberations but would not have decision-making or veto powers.

11. Since late February 2011, a number of protests have taken place in Iraq over the provision of basic services, the lack of employment opportunities and alleged

corruption of officials. Several demonstrations resulted in violence, with an estimated 20 people killed and 116 injured. On 25 February, protests were held in several cities across Iraq, including Baghdad, Basra and Erbil. In Baghdad, security forces prevented protestors from entering the International Zone, which houses the main Government offices, including that of the Prime Minister and the Parliament, as well as several diplomatic missions. The Governors of Wasit, Basra and Babil resigned following strong protests in their governorates. On 27 February, Prime Minister al-Maliki issued a statement requiring that Government ministries take urgent steps over a period of 100 days to improve living conditions and access to essential services. On 3 March, Ayad Allawi met with Moqtada al-Sadr in Najaf, and both announced their support for peaceful demonstrations.

12. In the Kurdistan region, on 17 February, clashes occurred in Sulemaniyah when security forces opened fire on protestors who had been throwing stones at the local office of the Kurdistan Democratic Party. Three people were reportedly killed and 45 injured in the incident. This event took place following calls by the Gorran (Change) Party for the dissolution of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and the parliament, alleging corruption and calling for fresh elections in the region. The demonstrations were organized by a relatively unknown group, the Network for Defending People's Rights and Freedoms.

13. The political and security situation in the disputed internal boundaries remains a matter of particular concern. On the night of 25 to 26 February, approximately 5,000 Peshmerga troops entered the Kirkuk governorate from the Kurdistan region. Without announcement, the troops passed through the Kirkuk combined security area established through the combined security mechanism between KRG, the United States Forces in Iraq (USF-I) and the Iraqi Government, taking up positions to the west, south and south-west of the area. KRG justified this heightened security presence because of the need to protect the city from alleged security threats. This move contravened the terms of the combined security mechanism as it was not coordinated with the combined security mechanism senior working group in Baghdad. The Iraqi Prime Minister, together with Turkmen and Arab party leaders, has called for the immediate withdrawal of the troops. Consultations are ongoing.

14. These developments, together with the planned drawdown of the United States military, underscore the need to review the combined security mechanism, which was established to allow Government of Iraq and KRG security forces to conduct joint patrols and operate checkpoints under United States auspices along Arab-Kurdish lines in the governorates of Diyala, Ninewa and Kirkuk. It should be recalled that during the negotiations on the formation of the government, Iraqi political parties discussed a number of issues related to Arab-Kurdish relations, including the future of the Peshmerga forces and the status of Kirkuk and other disputed territories. All these issues merit a comprehensive dialogue between the Iraqi parties in order to fully address the root causes of tensions in northern Iraq.

B. Regional developments pertaining to Iraq

15. Iraq's neighbours welcomed the formation of the national partnership Government. The Prime Ministers of Kuwait, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and Jordan, and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the United Arab Emirates were among the officials who visited Iraq during the reporting

period and explored opportunities for expanding bilateral relations, including in the areas of trade and investment.

16. Following the visit of my High-level Coordinator to Iraq in late November 2010, a joint Iraq-Kuwait team conducted an exploratory field assessment to a possible site of Kuwaiti mass graves in Nassiriyah, from 20 to 22 December, in accordance with the decision of the Technical Subcommittee of the Tripartite Commission at its sixty-sixth session in Kuwait on 28 September 2010. The field visit took place under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross with logistical support provided by UNAMI. It is anticipated that there will be further field work at the site in April 2011.

17. On 12 January, the Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Almad Al-Sabah, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, arrived in Baghdad for a historic one-day visit, the first since the invasion of Kuwait by the former Iraqi regime. The two sides agreed to establish a joint bilateral committee to review all outstanding issues between Iraq and Kuwait, co-chaired by their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs. The visit proceeded as planned, despite an incident in Kuwaiti territorial waters on 11 January which resulted in the killing of one Kuwaiti Coast Guard Officer and the sinking of an Iraqi vessel.

18. On 16 February, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki paid a reciprocal visit to Kuwait. He was received by the Emir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Prime Minister of Kuwait. Progress on bilateral issues and those pertaining to Chapter VII obligations were discussed. As further evidence of a new phase in Iraq-Kuwait relations, on 25 February, President Jalal Talabani attended the ceremonies for the fiftieth anniversary of Kuwait's independence and the twentieth anniversary of its liberation by coalition forces in the first Gulf war. The Deputy Secretary-General, Asha-Rose Migiro, participated on my behalf, along with my Special Representative, Ad Melkert, and the High-level Coordinator, Gennady Tarasov.

19. On 12 February 2011, President Talabani travelled to Damascus where he met with President Bashar al-Asad. Both countries agreed to reactivate the joint high-level committee meetings.

20. Events in Bahrain during the reporting period sparked a wave of demonstrations in Baghdad and predominantly Shia governorates of Iraq. The presence in Bahrain of the Gulf Cooperation Council's Peninsula Shield Force on 14 March also drew strong criticism from leaders of Iraq's Shia community, including Ayatollah Sistani, who warned of "dire consequences" and urged the Government of Bahrain to resolve the ongoing crisis through peaceful means.

C. International developments

21. The adoption of Security Council resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010) on 15 December marked an important milestone in Iraq's exit from Chapter VII obligations. This leaves outstanding mainly the country's Chapter VII obligations related to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, specifically those pertaining to the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and property; confirmation by the Government of Iraq of its readiness to continue with the Iraq-

Kuwait boundary maintenance project in accordance with Security Council resolution 833 (1993); and action by the Government of Iraq to relocate farmers from the border area to enable maintenance work to proceed. Making progress on these outstanding issues, as indicated in my report of 27 July 2009, pursuant to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1859 (2008) (S/2009/385), remains a prerequisite for the normalization of Iraq's international standing equal to that which it held prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990). A letter from the Prime Minister of Iraq reaffirming the land and water boundaries pursuant to Security Council resolution 833 (1993) would be an important confidence-building measure towards improving relations between the two countries.

III. Activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

A. Political activities

22. During the reporting period, my Special Representative continued to engage relevant political figures and parties in an effort to facilitate negotiations on outstanding issues related to the government formation process. He emphasized the need for the Government of Iraq to fill critical ministerial portfolios, as well as to finalize the establishment of the proposed National Council for Strategic Policies.

23. From 31 January to 2 February, the Special Representative travelled to Kuwait to discuss the normalization of relations between Iraq and Kuwait. Acknowledging efforts by Iraq to implement its outstanding obligations under Chapter VII, Kuwaiti officials confirmed their desire to see progress in that regard. Prior to the visit, similar sentiments were expressed by the Iraqi Prime Minister. In addition to continued engagement with Iraqi and Kuwaiti officials, my Special Representative regularly met with other international partners and United Nations entities regarding Iraq's remaining Chapter VII obligations.

24. On 4 March, my Special Representative travelled to the Islamic Republic of Iran for talks with Government officials, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Akbar Salehi. His visit was supported by the UNAMI liaison office in Tehran, which is now fully staffed and operational. Discussions focused on issues of mutual concern between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq and ways in which the United Nations could provide technical assistance, particularly on water resources management, the environment (dust storms), demining and the trafficking of narcotics. The UNAMI Tehran liaison office has been tasked with the follow-up to these initial ideas, in close cooperation with UNAMI headquarters and Iraqi and Iranian Government authorities.

25. UNAMI continued to work with the Government of Iraq and other Iraqi interlocutors to facilitate political dialogue on Iraq's disputed territories. After the formation of the new Government, my Special Representative initiated consultations with the representatives of the Government of Iraq and KRG on the possibility of establishing a successor arrangement to the high-level task force for advancing dialogue on issues related to disputed internal boundaries and the status of Kirkuk. In addition, UNAMI is preparing an integrated economic package aimed at vulnerable populations in the disputed territories and is working on a series of confidence-building measures previously agreed upon by the task force in the areas

of property claims and restitution, detainees and the educational curriculum and language rights.

26. For some time, UNAMI has actively engaged in facilitating dialogue aimed at ending the boycott of the Ninewa Provincial Council by the Ninewa Fraternal List, a local Kurdish party. To that end, UNAMI convened a series of meetings between the Arab-led Hadba List and the Ninewa Fraternal List. Discussions continued to focus on security, power-sharing, the provision of services and the protection and promotion of the rights of ethnic and religious communities. Power-sharing and security arrangements remain the most difficult issues to resolve. As a result of those efforts, the Committee on Religious and Ethnic Communities, set up with the support of UNAMI, finalized a list of recommendations required by all levels of Government to promote and protect the rights of Ninewa's religious and ethnic communities.

B. Electoral assistance activities

27. The Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission and the United Nations agreed on an initial workplan for the first half of 2011 for a plan of action aimed at providing institutional development support to the Commission, to be led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and funded by the United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund. The plan of action includes a range of activities, with significant focus on reviewing the legal framework, technical support and relationships with other institutions that play a role in the election process.

28. UNAMI has continued to support the Independent High Electoral Commission in its efforts to maintain operational readiness. The Commission has continued to develop its operational arrangements and timelines for several possible requests, including elections for governorate councils and a constitutional referendum in the Kurdistan region. It is expected that the draft law to establish a Kurdistan Region Electoral Commission will remain on the agenda of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament.

29. The Independent High Electoral Commission has initiated a detailed review of the requirements for district/subdistrict elections. Governorate electoral offices have been reviewing their voter registration lists and the distribution of polling centres with the aim of ensuring effective coverage of all districts and subdistricts and in order to identify potential challenges relating to boundaries. A forum was held from 6 to 10 February 2011 in Erbil to discuss preparations for district/subdistrict elections, including the refinement of the structure of the voter registry to include information on districts and subdistricts. Given the large number of constituencies, this has been complemented by other activities in Baghdad to review the relevant legal framework for these elections, requirements for political entities and the registration of candidates. The results of these assessments will form part of the Commission's continuing preparations in the event that a decision is reached on the holding of these elections.

C. Technical preparations for the census

30. Most of the technical and field preparations to conduct the census were completed with the assistance of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). However, the appointment of a Minister of Planning, responsible for overseeing the preparation of the census, remains pending. Political disagreements over the potential use of census data resulted in further delays in the implementation of the population counting stage. On 5 December, the heads of political parties and blocs met to discuss the political and security concerns surrounding the census. They decided to establish three provincial committees, in Ninewa, Diyala and Kirkuk, to explore possible solutions and report back to the Prime Minister by 19 December. The findings of the provincial committees have yet to be taken up by the Government. It should be noted that in Kirkuk, Arab and Turkomen members boycotted the committee meetings, with only the Kurds submitting their proposals.

D. Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development

31. With the establishment of the new Government, UNAMI and the United Nations country team stepped up their engagement with their official counterparts. On 31 January, on behalf of the Iraq Partners Forum, my Special Representative formally submitted the "Iraq Briefing Book" to Prime Minister al-Maliki, which outlines policy recommendations in areas such as private sector development, provision of essential services, human rights and governance reform and provides a basis for future discussions between Iraqi authorities and international partners.

32. UNAMI and the United Nations country team also held discussions with Government officials to assess how the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process could help mitigate the factors, including high unemployment, especially among the young, the lack of essential services and corruption, that sparked the recent civil unrest. The reform of the public distribution system and the overall social safety net also remain key agenda items for the Government. Technical advisory support provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) has been critical in this regard.

33. Five UNDAF priority working groups have been formed (governance and human rights; inclusive economic growth; environmental management; quality essential services; and investing in human capital) and the Iraq UNDAF multi-donor trust fund has been launched. As at January 2011, the Iraq UNDAF was 27.26 per cent funded. Of the $1.9 billion requested for the 2011-2014 period, $518.431 million is available. This amount includes $196.7 million from the United Nations Development Group's Iraq Trust Fund, $73.53 million from the regular budget of United Nations agencies and $248.201 million from other bilateral sources.

34. The national development plan and UNDAF will rely, to a certain degree, on partnerships with the Iraqi and international private sectors on corporate social responsibility issues. As part of the United Nations campaign to engage the private sector, in February UNDP representatives met with national and local government officials and representatives of multinational corporations active in the energy sector to prepare the launch of the national United Nations Global Compact initiative in Iraq. The meeting promoted the principles of corporate social responsibility and

initiated discussions on potential areas of partnership in the field of governance and economic recovery.

35. UNDP and the Government of Iraq continued the national anti-corruption strategy roll-out campaign, which was initiated in September 2010. To date, 334 workshops have been conducted, reaching out to 17,575 officials, 4,674 of which were female. The campaign, which will continue until June 2011, covers all Iraqi governorates and ministries, as well as civil society. Compliance with the United Nations Convention against Corruption will be a stepping stone to catalyse all other efforts to promote good governance.

36. Under the Iraq public sector modernization programme, the United Nations country team and its partners made further progress in efforts to reform the health, education and water and sanitation sectors. Additionally, technical and financial assistance will be provided for the rehabilitation of run-down power stations as well as the construction of new power stations. Environmental programmes will be started together with the Government and local communities.

37. In support of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations country team undertook key initiatives to assist the Government in planning and agenda setting, including: (a) the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) fourth multiple indicator cluster survey in Iraq to provide insight into the situation facing children and mothers; (b) a joint mission of the Resident Coordinator's Office and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to southern Iraq to gather further data and insight on marshlands recovery, working closely with local academics and scientists in Thi-Qar and Basra governorates; (c) the UNDP "Provision of legal training components for the legal institutions of Iraq" programme, which provides training in juvenile justice and gender-based violence in Erbil; (d) the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF micro-nutrient assessment and response survey control project, which will provide baseline data nationwide; and (e) UNFPA and WHO support to the Government to launch an integrated survey of women's health and social status in the country.

38. Water remains a critical issue in Iraq. Drought in the northern areas, including Kirkuk, is a key concern despite recent rains, and transboundary water resource management is a priority. The Government of Iraq requested UNDP assistance to develop an integrated water resources management programme and a negotiation strategy for Euphrates-Tigris riparian rights with its neighbours. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNOPS and UNDP provided consultants and resources to support disaster risk reduction in vulnerable areas of Iraq, including support to the newly created Committee of Disaster Management in the Council of Ministers. UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and WHO also supported water quality monitoring and access to safe water and sanitation, as well as the revision of policy and legislation for the decentralization of master planning of water and sanitation management. In addition, UNICEF supported the development of the water and sanitation policy for KRG, which is pending endorsement.

39. Protection issues also remain a high priority for the United Nations, particularly for the most vulnerable sections of society. UNAMI has been working with the protection working group of the United Nations country team, led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to

develop a "Protection of civilians strategy" in order to ensure a comprehensive analysis and approach for advocacy with Iraqi partners. UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs continued to manage an emergency response fund, which has played a key role in facilitating the transition from early recovery to development and also addresses the needs and gaps in essential services for vulnerable communities. By the end of 2010, through the fund, assistance had been provided to an estimated 570,000 vulnerable persons, including 294,000 women, 199,000 children and approximately 151,000 internally displaced persons. Overall, pockets of vulnerability remain in Iraq. However, as at mid-February, the Iraq humanitarian action plan 2010 was funded only up to 31.8 per cent.

40. UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM continued to support returnees, mainly in Baghdad and Diyala, providing emergency humanitarian assistance to newly displaced Iraqis, including Christians who fled to the Kurdistan region and Ninewa. Some 1.3 million internally displaced persons remain in Iraq. Of that number, UNHCR and its partners are providing assistance to some 400,000 who are homeless and destitute, and are spread across 300 settlements. Many of these displaced families are single-headed households, which are extremely vulnerable. Several hundred thousand Iraqis are estimated to be residing in neighbouring countries. In January, UNHCR announced an inter-agency appeal for $280 million to support Iraqi refugees. The regional response plan for Iraqi refugees brings together 40 international organizations and non-governmental organizations, supporting Iraqi refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the six States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

41. In collaboration with national partners and the United Nations country team, UNAMI is taking steps to strengthen the promotion and protection of women's rights in Iraq. In November 2010, UNAMI and the United Nations country team supported the launching of the "16 days of activism against gender violence" campaign. It was the first time Iraq had launched such a campaign since the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 1986. The campaign was also launched jointly by the United Nations and KRG. The campaign included an appeal to the international community, the United Nations and donor States for support to programmes and initiatives to end violence against women and girls and advocated for effective laws to protect and prevent all forms of violence and discrimination, including harmful traditional practices against women and girls. On 8 March, International Women's Day was celebrated in Baghdad by an event jointly hosted by the Government of Iraq, the United Nations and the European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq.

42. As at 31 December 2010, the United Nations Development Group's Iraq Trust Fund portfolio stood at $1.43 billion, based on total donor commitments of $1.36 billion and $72 million in Fund and agency-level interest earnings. The Trust Fund is now focused on the implementation and closure of 200 approved projects. As at 31 December 2010, 108 projects were operationally closed, and 92 projects were ongoing.

E. Human rights activities

43. The security situation in Iraq continues to affect the civilian population, who face ongoing acts of violence perpetrated by armed opposition groups and criminal gangs. In particular, armed groups continue to employ tactics that deliberately target crowded public areas and kill and maim civilians indiscriminately. While some attacks appear to be sectarian in nature, frequently targeting religious gatherings or residential areas, others seem random, aimed at creating fear and terror in the population at large and casting doubt over the ability of the Government and Iraqi security forces to stem the violence. Assassinations also persist across the country, targeting, inter alia, Government employees, tribal and community leaders, members of the judiciary and associated persons.

44. Mass graves continue to be discovered, containing the victims of the former regime, or of the violence that has afflicted the country since 2003. On 11 December 2010, the Ministry for Human Rights reported the discovery of a mass grave in Basra governorate in the village of al-Dair (al-Qurna district). Legal procedures have yet to be completed in order for these graves to be exhumed by investigative teams from the Ministry of Human Rights and the directorate of martyrs in Basra. On 20 December 2010, Iraqi security forces reportedly unearthed another mass grave in the Mahaweel area in Babil governorate, containing the bodies of 13 civilians. Both grave sites are believed to date from around 2006 or 2007 and to contain the victims of insurgent groups. In addition, the issue of persons who disappeared during the conflict between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan has resurfaced, as the families of victims have formally filed complaints with the Human Rights Committee of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament. According to press reports in early March, a mass grave containing the remains of some 3,000 persons was discovered by Peshmerga forces south of Kirkuk City.

45. Ongoing violence has caused immeasurable suffering for all Iraqis, Sunnis, Shias, Christians and others alike. During the reporting period, numerous suicide and bomb attacks against Shia pilgrims were carried out, particularly during the Ashura (December 2010) and Arba'een (January 2011) commemorations. In some of the most serious incidents in Karbala, two car bombs killed 65 persons on 20 January, while 18 died in a similar attack in the same town three days later. On 12 February, 37 deaths were reported when a suicide bomber targeted a bus station in Samarra. Overall, from December 2010 to February 2011, at least 141 people were killed and 427 injured in attacks on pilgrims.

46. Members of the Christian minority continue to be targeted by armed and extremist groups, compelling them to seek refuge in the Kurdistan region. From December 2010 until February 2011, UNAMI recorded at least five attacks targeting Christians, four in Mosul and one in Kirkuk, in which at least two Christians were killed. These attacks created unease among members of the Christian community in Mosul, who began fleeing the area. Currently 803 Christian families have been displaced to Erbil alone, including 466 from Baghdad and 294 from Mosul. Although internally displaced persons have been welcomed by the Kurdish authorities, integration is difficult owing to limited availability of resources, language barriers and difficulties in finding employment.

47. Conditions in Iraqi prisons continue to be of concern according to reports by the media and several international non-governmental organizations which allege torture and maltreatment of detainees. This is especially worrying in facilities operated by the 56th "Baghdad" Brigade, which is administered by the Ministry of Defence, but which receives its policy direction from the Office of the Prime Minister. The Government has rejected these claims but has promised to investigate. In a positive development, Kurdish authorities have passed legislation to compensate people who have been illegally detained. The Kurdistan Regional Parliament is also in the process of finalizing a law on prison reform.

48. The protection of children in contact with the law continues to be a challenge as the numbers of boys and girls in prison and in pretrial detention remained high throughout the reporting period. As at 28 November 2010, there were 1,136 children (1,096 boys and 40 girls) in detention, with 345 (12 girls and 333 boys) in pretrial and 791 (763 boys and 28 girls) in post-trial detention, excluding the region of Kurdistan. In Baghdad, girls and women (40 pre/post-trial) remain held in the same cells, including the five infants born to women while in detention. In Basra, boys held in detention (110 pre/post-trial) were mixed with adults during daytime hours until November 2010, when after a riot at the facility the adult inmates were moved. Although there are some improvements in conditions for children in pretrial detention facilities being run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, facilities for convicts continue to be overcrowded with potential for disease, abuse and exploitation.

49. Concerted advocacy efforts by UNICEF and other actors for the creation of alternatives to detention and diversion of children with minor offences from the formal justice system are yet to have a tangible impact. Iraq's juvenile care law provides for alternative measures, but these options are rarely utilized except for informal applications such as communal dispute resolution. Moreover, the use of restorative measures and alternatives to detention in the community is inconsistent, difficult to measure and not recognized by the formal justice system.

50. On 16 February, the parliamentary Committee on Human Rights submitted a report to the Council of Representatives on the process of establishing the Independent High Commission on Human Rights. Subsequently, the Speaker of the Parliament requested the political parties to put forward their candidates to serve as members of the expert committee that will select the Commissioners. UNAMI has also been invited to participate in the process.

51. A number of demonstrations have taken place throughout the country during the reporting period, most notably in Basra, Kut, Baghdad, Mosul, Karbala, Diwaniyah, Anbar and Sulaymaniyah. While many protests have been peaceful, there have been instances of violence in which some protesters or security forces have allegedly been killed. At least 20 people were reportedly killed since the beginning of the protests and 116 injured in shootings. UNAMI has received reports of arrests, unlawful detention and torture of demonstrators. Several journalists and media workers who were covering the protests were arrested, threatened and ill-treated by the police.

52. UNAMI continues to monitor the situation in Camp Ashraf following the departure of USF-I in July 2010 and engage with the Ashraf Committee of the Government of Iraq to address the humanitarian concerns of the camp's residents. A number of incidents between camp residents and Iraqi police officers reportedly

turned violent in late December 2010, resulting in some residents sustaining injuries. On 7 January 2011, protesters gathered outside the camp to complain about the continued presence of former fighters of the People's Mujahedin Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the camp. A number of camp residents sustained injuries as they clashed with the protesters at the fence of the camp. The Iraqi authorities have continued to insist that the situation at the site will not be allowed to continue indefinitely. While respecting Iraqi sovereignty in the matter, UNAMI reiterates its call for restraint on both sides, respect for the universally accepted humanitarian standards and applicable international human rights law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iraq is a party.

F. Security, operational and logistical issues

53. The United Nations continues to operate in a volatile security environment in Iraq, with persistent and unpredictable changes in the situation. There were over 3,000 security incidents during the reporting period, which resulted in at least 950 civilian deaths. The increase in operational capacity and security operations of the Iraqi security forces has, however, contributed towards a reduction in overall attacks involving improvised explosive devices, as well as significant interdiction of supply routes and materials for those devices.

54. UNAMI is expanding its security capacity and realigning its resources in order to ensure that robust, credible and flexible security arrangements are in place before the USF-I drawdown at the end of 2011. Given that insurgents still demonstrate capacity to stage complex attacks in Iraq, a trend that is likely to continue in the near future, the United Nations will need to continue to remain vigilant in ensuring the safety and security of its personnel. At the same time, acceptable security conditions and the support of security personnel of KRG enabled the United Nations to increase operations in the Kurdistan region.

55. To ensure the establishment of independent operational capabilities following the drawdown of USF-I, and in preparation for the expected expansion of the United Nations presence in Iraq in 2011, United Nations Headquarters and UNAMI continue to consult the Government of Iraq and representatives of the United States Government. In Baghdad, UNAMI continues to pursue the allocation of the adjacent United States Agency for International Development (USAID) compound to serve as a new integrated United Nations compound. Elsewhere in Iraq, UNAMI has formally requested the Government of Iraq to allocate land for its use at Baghdad International Airport and in Kirkuk and Basra. A positive response to those requests would allow UNAMI to establish self-standing offices at the above locations prior to the United States military drawdown.

56. The imminent drawdown of USF-I has necessitated that UNAMI develop independent transportation capabilities. To that end, UNAMI has successfully brought two helicopters based in Baghdad into operation. Three UNAMI armoured buses were procured and delivered to Baghdad at the end of December 2010. These acquisitions will significantly improve passenger transfers between the international zone and Baghdad International Airport. In addition, the WFP-led United Nations Humanitarian Air Service is expected to be operational in Iraq starting in April and to provide complementary support to the United Nations, donors and international non-governmental organizations working in the country.

IV. Observations

57. I commend Iraq's political leaders for their commitment to dialogue and consensus building, which made the formation of a national partnership Government on 21 December 2010 possible. The transition from one elected Government to another was an historic accomplishment and brought an end to months of political uncertainty. However, further steps need to be taken to complete the Government formation process as soon as possible, including appointments to key security posts. In the interest of national reconciliation, I also call upon Iraqi political leaders to establish the National Council for Strategic Policies, which was agreed as part of the power-sharing agreement reached between the political parties.

58. The early finalization of the Government formation process will enable Iraq's leadership to take the measures required to address the legitimate concerns of the Iraqi people. As unfolding events have shown over the past few weeks, Iraq is not immune to the wave of civil unrest that has affected other parts of the region. The demonstrations that took place across Iraq, and the violence that ensued, underscore the urgent need to address the poor state of public services, high unemployment and the perceived failure to tackle corruption. Unless there is quick and concerted action by the Government of Iraq to address these concerns, the political and security gains that Iraq has made in recent years could be undermined. In this regard, I welcome Prime Minister al-Maliki's recent instruction to Government ministries to identify urgent interventions to begin improving services and overall living conditions.

59. While mindful of the need to maintain security and order, and prevent forces opposed to Iraq's democratic transition from exploiting the situation, I am concerned at the use of force by Iraq's security forces in handling some of these protests and the consequent loss of life. Of grave concern also are reports of arbitrary arrests, detention and torture, and the ill-treatment of journalists and media personnel covering these events. I call on the Government of Iraq to conduct an independent investigation into these alleged violations and to ensure a measured approach in dealing with future protests by exercising maximum restraint and avoiding violence.

60. In this context, I wish to reassure the Government of Iraq that UNAMI and the United Nations country team will spare no effort in assisting it to address the major socio-economic challenges facing the country. Iraq's national development plan, supported by UNDAF, provides a platform for the Government of Iraq, the United Nations and partners to address priority areas, which directly relate to the concerns raised by citizens, including good governance, human rights, inclusive programmes for economic and social development and the delivery of quality essential services.

61. Recent events in Kirkuk governorate underscore the urgent need to instil fresh momentum to promote Arab-Kurdish dialogue. I note with concern the rising ethnic tensions following the decision by KRG to deploy some 5,000 additional Peshmerga troops along the outskirts of Kirkuk City. I urge all to exercise utmost restraint and allow for a peaceful and meaningful dialogue which addresses the core concerns of the Iraqi people. This incident highlights the urgent need for Iraqi leaders to work together to resolve the status of Kirkuk and other disputed territories. In this regard, UNAMI is assisting all stakeholders to find mutually acceptable solutions. Possible mechanisms to achieve this are being considered, including a successor arrangement

to the high-level task force and through the promotion of other confidence-building measures such as property restitution, detainees and language and education rights.

62. Notwithstanding the progress that has been achieved on the political front, the overall security situation remains tenuous as some seek to undermine the progress Iraq has made over the past few years in reducing sectarian violence. The continued targeting of Iraq's Christian community as a result of which hundreds of families have been displaced to Erbil from Baghdad and Mosul, is a source of major concern. I commend KRG for attending to the immediate needs of those displaced. There can also be no justification for the suicide attacks that have targeted Shia pilgrims and resulted in dozens of women, children and men killed and hundreds others injured. Ongoing attacks that impact Sunni communities, killing innocent people, are equally reprehensible. I renew my call on the Government of Iraq to do its utmost to protect all communities that continue to be targeted for their religious beliefs.

63. While violence continues to take a heavy toll on Iraqi society as a whole, women and girls are often the silent victims of that violence. I remain personally committed to ensuring that the United Nations will support all initiatives, whether taken by the Government or civil society, aimed at breaking the wall of silence surrounding violence against women. On this note, and despite the efforts to improve the status of Iraqi women, I remain concerned that women are still underrepresented at the political and decision-making levels.

64. I welcome the decision by the Security Council on 15 December 2010 to bring to an end a number of Chapter VII mandates, which marked a major step towards the normalization of Iraq's international status. The onus is now on Iraq to demonstrate tangible and expeditious progress on its outstanding Chapter VII obligations, particularly on issues related to missing persons and archives, and compensation. I take this opportunity to welcome the positive momentum generated following the recent historic exchange of high-level visits by the Prime Ministers of Iraq and Kuwait. I commend the decision to form a joint bilateral committee to immediately take steps to address issues of mutual concern between the two countries. It is my hope that this new spirit of goodwill will translate into concrete actions that can contribute to building confidence between the two sides. To that end, both my Special Representative and High-level Coordinator will continue to assist Iraq and Kuwait in bringing about a closure to these long-standing issues.

65. I also wish to reiterate my call on the Government of Iraq to reaffirm its commitment to Security Council resolution 833 (1993) with respect to its land and maritime boundary with Kuwait as soon as possible and to take urgent steps to resume the border maintenance work, including the relocation of farmers away from the border with Kuwait. Tangible efforts by the Government of Iraq in all these areas will hopefully enable the Council to move forward on my report under Council resolution 1859 (2009), which was submitted to the Council in July 2009.

66. I would also like to express my thanks to all multilateral and bilateral donors and to international and local non-governmental organizations for their pursuit of a stable and prosperous Iraq. I am grateful to Member States for their continuing support of the United Nations during this transitional phase and, in particular, their decision to approve the UNAMI 2011 budget. Additional funding approved by the General Assembly will allow UNAMI to put in place the necessary security and support arrangements as USF-I draws down.

67. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the dedicated efforts of my Special Representative and the staff of UNAMI and the United Nations country team, who continue to carry out their mission under difficult, at times dangerous, circumstances. I salute their courage and commitment to Iraq.

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Security Council

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Letter dated 31 March 2011 from the representatives of Cambodia, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The representatives of the countries signing the attached letter (see annex) write to you in your capacity as President of the Security Council during the month of March, in order to solicit the Security Council to consider the content of the attached letter with urgency, and formally request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kosal **Sea**
Permanent Representative of Cambodia

(*Signed*) Pedro **Núñez Mosquera**
Permanent Representative of Cuba

(*Signed*) Juan Mbomio **Ndong Mangue**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Equatorial Guinea

(*Signed*) María **Rubiales de Chamorro**
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua

(*Signed*) Nedra P. **Miguel**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

(*Signed*) Jorge **Valero Briceño**
Permanent Representative of Venezuela
(Bolivarian Republic of)

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Annex

Letter dated 28 March 2011 from the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Indonesia, Mali, Namibia, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam* to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The representatives of the countries signing this letter write to you in your capacity as the President of the Security Council during the month of March, in order to express their deep concern for the developments currently taking place around the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In this regard, it is requested that the Security Council, working closely with countries and organizations in the region, take urgent measures leading to an immediate ceasefire and a peaceful and sustainable solution reflecting the will of the Libyan people, in order to put an end to their suffering.

(*Signed*) John W. **Ashe**
Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda

(*Signed*) Pablo **Solón**
Permanent Representative of Bolivia
(Plurinational State of)

(*Signed*) Kosal **Sea**
Permanent Representative of Cuba

(*Signed*) Pedro **Núñez Mosquera**
Permanent Representative of Cuba

(*Signed*) Vince **Henderson**
Permanent Representative of Dominica

(*Signed*) Francisco **Carrión-Mena**
Permanent Representative of Ecuador

(*Signed*) Anatolio **Ndong Mba**
Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea

(*Signed*) Hasan **Kleib**
Permanent Representative of Indonesia

(*Signed*) Ami **Diallo Traoré**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Mali

(*Signed*) Wilfried I. **Emvula**
Permanent Representative of Namibia

(*Signed*) María **Rubiales de Chamorro**
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua

* The letter from the representative of Viet Nam is dated 30 March 2011.

(*Signed*) Nedra P. **Miguel**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

(*Signed*) Jorge **Valero Briceño**
Permanent Representative of Venezuela
(Bolivarian Republic of)

(*Signed*) **Le** Luong Minh
Permanent Representative of Viet Nam